

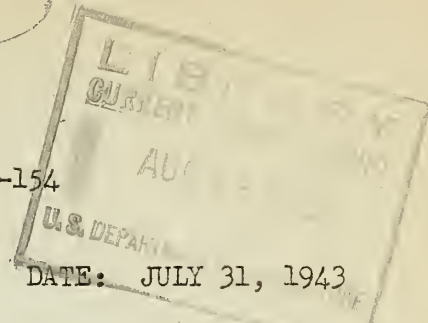
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CONSUMER TIME
EFFECTIVE PRICE CONTROL

R-154



NETWORK: NBC

DATE: JULY 31, 1943

ORIGIN: WRC

TIME: 12:15-12:30 P.M. EWT

(Produced by the Food Distribution Administration of the War Food Administration, this script is for reference only and may not be broadcast without special permission. The title CONSUMER TIME is restricted to network broadcasts of this program—presented for more than ten years in the interests of consumers.)

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1. SOUND: CASH REGISTER RINGS TWICE.....MONEY IN THE TILL
2. MAN: This is CONSUMER TIME.
3. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.....MONEY IN TILL AGAIN
4. WOMAN: That's your money buying a living in wartime.
5. SOUND: CASH REGISTER
6. MAN: And how can I use that money best?
7. WOMAN: I've got a lot of groceries to buy.
8. SOUND: CASH REGISTER.....CLOSE DRAWER.
9. MAN: Yes, CONSUMER TIME.....helping you save some of that money. Keeping you posted....with our Consumer Reporter, Johnny Smith.
10. JOHN: In just a moment, the War Orders, straight from Washington. But first reminding you that CONSUMER TIME today will tell how the people of one large American city actually pushed down the cost of living index by 5 percent—and bring you an 8 point program. designed to stabilize prices and lower the cost of living in your area.

10. JOHN (Continued):

Now, the War Orders, straight
from Washington.

11. FREYMAN: You certainly do get around, Johnny—digging up news and facts and such.
12. JOHN: I do the best I can, Mrs. Freyman.
13. FREYMAN: After doing the things I've got to do around the home—and with the Red Cross and Civilian Defense—and a few other things, I don't have the time to get around and to keep up on things as I'd like to.
14. JOHN: What's troubling you? Anything in particular?
15. FREYMAN: Oh, just ration points....I'm trying to make mine do full duty.
16. JOHN: That's true of all of us.
17. FREYMAN: I know how important rationing is....and how we must keep prices in line.
18. JOHN: I should say so.
19. FREYMAN: But I wish I could DO something about it to make it work even better.
20. JOHN: Here in the studio I have a man who says you CAN do something...plenty....about it.
21. FREYMAN: And he is?
22. JOHN: Mr. A. C. Hoffman, Chief of the Price Branch, Food Distribution Administration....Mrs. Freyman, Mr. Hoffman.
23. AD LIB: How do you do.
24. FREYMAN: Mr. Hoffman, you say I can do something ... to make price controls more effective?
25. HOFFMAN: Yes, you can...you and your friends....plus a little determination.

26. FREYMAN: How?
27. HOFFMAN: By doing just like the people and the government recently did in New Orleans. The people down there got right worked up. Take Al and Betty Osborne, for example.....(FADE)
28. AL: Betty, that meat we had for dinner....
29. BETTY: What about it? Wasn't it good?
30. AL: Oh, sure....but the price per pound was 3 cents higher than the ceiling price published in the paper.
31. BETTY: Yes, and if I talk back to the butcher, he'll take it out on me next time I come in the store --and no meat.
32. AL: Oh, he'll do that, will he?
33. BETTY: Yes, he will.
34. AL: Well, maybe, by yourself you can't do much, but if a lot of us....
35. BETTY: What are you planning to do, Al?
36. AL: Well, I'm going to do PLENTY. You get (FADE) an Osborne worked up...and...
37. HOFFMAN: Yes, the Osborne family was getting riled--mad. And so were the Tuckers...George and Edna...who also live in New Orleans.
38. GEORGE: So the storekeeper told you he had an extra special on canned peas, eh, Edna?
39. EDNA: Yes, George. But at the price he asked, they should have been canned gold nuggets.
40. GEORGE: They were a lot higher than at the other stores?

41. EDNA: Oh yes, but as a "special favor" the storekeeper didn't want any blue ration stamps with the cans he sold.
42. GEORGE: Oh-oh! Black Market stuff!
43. EDNA: I guess so.
44. GEORGE: Hope you didn't buy any.
45. EDNA: Buy any? I was so mad I wanted to throw a can of peas through his window.
46. GEORGE: The few careless—or crooked—merchants can't get away with this. They're the exceptions! They mustn't be allowed to.
47. EDNA: And just what, my dear husband, are you going to do about it?
48. GEORGE: I'm going to help put a stop to it—that's all.
49. EDNA: A one man crusade to reduce the cost of living in New Orleans?
50. GEORGE: You just watch—and stick with me!
51. HOFFMAN: Violations in ceiling prices....beginning black market transactions....rising living costs. Yes, the New Orleans folks were talking about them plenty....and getting madder, and readier for action. On street corners, in busses, offices—everywhere in the city....they said....
52. WOMAN I: (FILTER MIKE) I'm not going to stand for it.
53. MAN I: (FILTER MIKE) They're breaking the law.
54. WOMAN II: (FILTER MIKE) Some of these food prices are outrageous.

55. MAN: (FILTER MIKE) As a merchant who wants to do his duty — I'm for cooperation.
56. MAN II: (FILTER MIKE) We gotta stamp out these black market guys. To help ourselves and the great majority of retailers who are doing things right.
57. ENTIRE CAST (TOGETHER ((FILTER MIKE) They can't get away with this. We'll stop it in New Orleans.
58. HOFFMAN: Yes, sir, New Orleans was literally steaming. Out of the steam came a plan, by a civic-minded man. This man argued....
59. MAN: If a majority of the consumers will pledge themselves to pay no more than Government ceiling prices—and if ethical merchants will reaffirm their pledge to charge no more than ceiling prices....living costs will quickly stabilize—or even drop....in this city. Consumers must agree to accept no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps.
60. HOFFMAN: That was the whole essence of the New Orleans plan....simple but effective.
61. FREYMAN: The plan didn't just get up and work by itself did it?
62. HOFFMAN: It did not. 6000 block leaders canvassed the city and got the pledges.
63. FREYMAN: And the pledge was.....?
64. HOFFMAN: Very simple. It read, "I will pay no more than top legal prices. I accept no rationed goods without giving up ration stamps."

65. FREEMAN: You say 6000 block leaders canvassed the city,
securing those pledges?
66. HOFFMAN: That's right....and within 48 hours, pledges were
appearing on the covers of War Ration Book No. 2—
appearing on thousands of them.
67. FREEMAN: That must have been an eye-opener to merchants who
had been chiseling.
68. HOFFMAN: I'll say it was. In one store (FADE) the thing
that happened.....
69. STOREKEEPER: Well, this is a very fine leg of lamb, lady.
That's why it's just a little more expensive than
the ceiling price.
70. CUSTOMER: Oh no! I want it—and I'm going to have it at the
ceiling price—no more.
71. STOREKEEPER: Oh no! If you don't want to pay my price—others
will.
72. CUSTOMER: That's where you're wrong.
73. MAN I: Ceiling price—or we all walk out—and stay out.
74. WOMAN I: There's a nice stiff penalty for charging more
than ceiling prices.
75. MAN I: If you try to sell for more than ceiling prices....
you're not going to be in business long, around
here.
76. STOREKEEPER: Well, I thought.....
77. ALL: (MEASURED CHANT) We pay no more than ceiling
prices.
78. ALL: (MEASURED CHANT) We accept no rationed goods
without giving up ration stamps.

(PAUSE)

79. HOFFMAN: The long and short of it was, that this New Orleans campaign was so successful—in a very short time... that the cost of living index was pushed down 5 percent.
80. FREYMAN: I think that's wonderful.
81. HOFFMAN: Sure it is—and a drive like that is just getting started, all over the country.
82. FREYMAN: I'm going to be in on it.
83. HOFFMAN: There will be consumer pledge cards for everyone to sign....and a sticker to go in the windows of those who sign.
84. JOHN: You can get your home front pledge card and sticker locally, through Government agencies.... or by writing to CONSUMER TIME, War Food Administration, Washington, 25, D. C.
85. FREYMAN: Be sure to include your name, address and radio station.
86. HOFFMAN: Violations of ceiling prices...and black market operations have been, are being and will continue to be prosecuted by the Government. But, aside from the "punishment" angle—what was done to hammer down and hold down prices in New Orleans, can and will be done....all over the United States.
87. FREYMAN: Thank you, Mr.Hoffman, for these words of encouragement. The plan you outline is a great way to help control prices here.

88. JOHN:

It certainly is....It had been our intention at this moment to present Lord Woolton, British Minister of Food, speaking from London. We regret that circumstances beyond our control make this impossible, but we hope we may do so at an early date. Mr. Hoffman, can you give us a little more information on this extension of the New Orleans plan?

89. HOFFMAN:

Yes, Johnny. You might say there's something in the wind...a movement gaining momentum from Portland, Maine, to Portland, Oregon -- from the Great Lakes to the Gulf.....It's a movement that's bound to have an important effect in helping to keep down America's living costs. Today, groups of determined, patriotic men and women, the country over are taking the Home Front Pledge. The idea behind this pledge is sound because it goes straight to the heart of America's fundamental honesty. It makes an appeal to that honesty and to every American's sense of fair play. It is only necessary to point out to the American people the right thing to do -- and ask them to do it.

89-a FREYMAN:

In other words, the Home Front Pledge Campaign is the expression in human terms--of our Government's program of rationing and price control.

89-b HOFFMAN:

That's right! Our Government has taken two important steps to eliminate increases in food prices and to assure everyone a fair share of food. Essential foods have been rationed. Top legal prices have been established on nearly every essential food item in the family market basket. These are wartime prices for your community. The new price plan for food, together with the rent control program, now provides the consumer with definite dollars and cents price ceilings for items totalling nearly 60 percent of the entire cost of living. Let's list carefully what every individual consumer can do to strengthen and support the Government's program of price control and rationing. First—make the home front pledge.

90. VOICE I

Second, display the home front pledge symbol window sticker proudly in your window.

90-a VOICE II:

Third, watch for the publication of top legal food prices as they apply to your community.

90-b VOICE III:

Clip out these official lists and carry them with you when you shop.

90-c VOICE I:

If wartime community prices aren't published in your newspaper, obtain them from your War Price and Rationing Board.

90-d VOICE II:

Check your retailer's selling prices to see that they are no higher than the top legal prices established by the Government.

90-c VOICE III:

If the retailer's prices are too high, you should talk with him about them. The honest retailer--and the vast majority are honest--will welcome such a check up for it is his protection against the dishonest dealer.

91. HOFFMAN:

However.....if the retailer is unwilling to correct errors, it is your duty to report the violations to the Price Panel of your War Price and Rationing Board. You are assured that your name will not be used by the price panel in investigating your report

91-a FREYMAN:

It seems to me that people who will do those things are determined to hold the line against rising food costs and to stamp out the activities of all chiselers, profiteers and black market operators.

91-b HOFFMAN:

That is correct. The importance of stabilizing costs was tersely summed up by the President last April 8 when he said. "To hold the line, we cannot tolerate further increases in prices affecting the cost of living or further increases in general wage or salary rates except where clearly necessary to correct sub-standard living conditions. The only way to hold the line is to stop trying to find justification for not holding it here or not holding it there."

91-c JOHN:

To put over this Home Front Pledge Campaign, it seems to me that it's essential to assure the active cooperation of all the people in the community--every man woman and child.

91-d FREYMAN:

And, as one of them, I say it's particularly necessary that we women give our whole-hearted support in maintaining the Government's program of price control and rationing because, when you get down to bed rock facts---we women do the buying.

92. HOFFMAN:

You're right about that, Mrs. Freyman. Another thing I want to emphasize is that this emblem to put in the window isn't just a "window sticker thing" --- it is a symbol....a symbol of a pledge that men and women are actively supporting the Government's price control and rationing program.

92-a FREYMAN:

I imagine a community will want the help of as many responsible organizations and groups as possible in this Home Front Pledge Campaign.

92-b HOFFMAN:

Indeed so---there's work enough for all.....OCD block leaders, women's clubs, business organizations---all good Americans who are determined to do their part on the home front are needed in their communities to do their part in this pledge campaign.

I can't emphasize too strongly that Americans on the Home Front are at battle today with one of the most dangerous forces our country has had to face in this war or in any other war. The ranks of these dangerous forces include "PART TIME" Americans --- those who put personal gain above personal patriotism. In the final analysis, the people and only the people can smash the inflationary spiral and assure a fair share of food for everyone. The people and only the people can keep the cost of living down within reasonable limits.

92-b HOFFMAN (CONTINUED): Do your part in this home front war effort—
which will make victory more certain—and certainly,
more speedy.

93. FREYMAN: Thank you, Mr. A. C. Hoffman, for being with us
today. After learning what happened in New Orleans
— and after hearing you explain some of the ins and
outs of the Home Front Pledge Campaign, well, I'm
more than ever determined to do my part. How do you
feel about it, Johnny?

94. JOHN: Signing the home front pledge to pay no more than ceiling prices and to accept no rationed goods without ration stamps will help plenty.
95. FREYMAN: I think so—and displaying the window sticker so all of us can let each other know—and remind one another—what we are doing and what must be done.
96. JOHN: Be sure to get your home front pledge card.... and window sticker.
97. FREYMAN: I will....For the pledge card and window sticker I write to.....
98. JOHN: **CONSUMER TIME.....**War Food Administration, Washington, 25, D. C.
99. FREYMAN: And I give my name, address and call letters of my radio station.
100. JOHN: That's right....and the home front pledge card and window sticker will be sent to you....free of charge.
101. FREYMAN: Have you been sort of, digging around for next week, Johnny?
102. JOHNNY: Indeed I have—and I believe I have some things on canning and about Group 2 of the seven basic foods that will come in handy. I think we'll call next week's program — YOU CAN FOR VICTORY.
103. FREYMAN: Be seeing you next week.

104. ANNOUNCER:

For your copy of the home front pledge....and the window sticker....write to CONSUMER TIME, Washington, 25, D. C. Be sure to give your name, address and the call letters of your radio station. This is the pledge card that helped lower the cost of living index in New Orleans by 5 percent. The card....and the window sticker are free.

Heard on today's program were-----

A. C. Hoffman, Chief of the Price Branch, Food Distribution Administration.

Script by Granville Dickey.

CONSUMER TIME is a public service of N.B.C. and its affiliated radio stations—presented by the War Food Administration and other Government agencies working for consumers.

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